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# Election conspiracies fuel dispute over voter fraud system

**By CHRISTINA A. CASSIDY**  
**Associated Press**  
**ATLANTA (AP)** — A bipartisan effort among states to combat voter fraud has found itself in the crosshairs of conspiracy theories fueled by Donald Trump's false claims about the 2020 presidential election and now faces an uncertain future.

One state has dropped out, a second is in the process of doing so and a handful of other Republican-led states are deciding whether to stay.

The aim of the Electronic Registration Information Center, a voluntary system known as ERIC, has been to

help member states maintain accurate lists of registered voters by sharing data that allows officials to identify and remove people who have died or moved to other states. Reports also help states identify and ultimately prosecute people who vote in multiple states.

In Maryland, state election officials have received reports through the system identifying some 66,000 potentially deceased voters and 778,000 people who may have moved out of state since 2013.

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A poll worker prepares to give a ballot to a voter at the Blue Ash, Ohio Municipal building for the primary, Aug. 2, 2022.

Associated Press

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President Joe Biden walks towards reporters on the South Lawn of the White House in Washington, Friday, March 3, 2023, before boarding Marine One.

Associated Press

## Biden expected to tighten rules on U.S. investment in China

By **AAMER MADHANI** and **FATIMA HUSSEIN**

Associated Press

**WILMINGTON, Del. (AP)** —

The Biden administration is close to tightening rules on some overseas investments by U.S. companies in an effort to limit China's ability to acquire technologies that could improve its military prowess, according to a U.S. official familiar with the

deliberations.

The soon-to-be-issued executive order from President Joe Biden will limit American investment in advanced technologies that have national security applications — such as next-generation military capabilities that could help China improve the speed and accuracy of military decision making, according to the official, who was not authorized to comment and spoke on the condition of anonymity.

The expected action is the latest effort by the White House to target China's military and technology sectors at a time of increasingly fraught relations between the world's two biggest economies.

In October, the Biden administration imposed export controls to limit China's ability to access advanced chips, which it says can be used to make weapons, commit human rights abuses and improve the speed and accuracy of its military logistics.

The complicated relationship has become further strained in recent weeks after the U.S. shot down a Chinese spy balloon last month that traversed the country. The Biden administration has also publicized U.S. intelligence findings that raise concern Beijing is weighing providing Russia weaponry for its ongoing war on Ukraine.

The tensions were on display as top diplomats from the Group of 20 industrialized and developing nations ended a contentious meeting in New Delhi on Thursday with no consensus on the Ukraine war and concerns about China's widening global influence

dominating much of the talks.

Meanwhile, China this past week blasted the new House Select Committee on the Chinese Communist Party after it held its first hearing on countering Beijing's influence. Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning demanded its members "discard their ideological bias and zero-sum Cold War mentality."

Administration officials have been consulting with allies as they've worked on formulating the new regulations on U.S. investment, according to the official.

The Wall Street Journal first reported on Saturday that the Treasury and Commerce departments delivered reports to lawmakers on Friday detailing plans for the new regulatory system to address U.S. overseas investment in advanced technologies.

The agencies said they expected to seek additional money for the investment screening program in the White House budget, which is scheduled to be released on March 9, according to the Journal.

A White House National Security Council spokesperson declined to comment on the Treasury and Commerce reports, but noted that administration officials have kept Congress apprised on its progress in crafting an approach to overseas investment.

The expected action is certain to face pushback from U.S. firms. Administration officials have sought to signal to the business community that even as they look to examine rules on U.S. investment in China, they are mindful of not overreaching. □



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# Election conspiracies fuel dispute over voter fraud system

continued from Front

In Georgia, the system is credited with providing data to remove nearly 100,000 voters no longer eligible to vote in the state. Yet the effort to improve election integrity and thwart voter fraud has become a target of suspicion among some Republicans after a series of online posts early last year questioning its funding and purpose. Shortly after, Louisiana left the group, citing concerns raised by the posts. A day after being sworn in last month, Alabama's new secretary of state, Wes Allen, sent a letter informing the center of the state's exit after criticizing the program during his campaign. Other Republican-led states could follow, according to a survey of state election offices by The Associated Press. Officials in Florida and Missouri said they are evaluating their participation, while legislation in Texas could force the state to leave. West Virginia election officials declined to weigh in, saying they are "closely monitoring the situation with ERIC's membership."

The departures and potential for additional ones have frustrated state election officials involved in the effort and have demonstrated how deeply election conspiracies have spread throughout the Republican Party.

"The idea that any state would leave, and we know many are leaving or considering leaving, based solely on misinformation that in most cases they know is not accurate -- it's bizarre to me," said Michigan Secretary of State Jocelyn Benson, a Democrat. "Their leaving directly harms the security and integrity of their own state voter rolls and their ability to keep them up to date and accurate."

Not all Republican-led states are reevaluating their participation in the program. Of those surveyed by AP, election offices in 23 states and the District of Columbia said they had no



A poll worker, center left, speaks through a plastic barrier while assisting a voter in a polling station at Marshfield High School, Nov. 3, 2020, in Marshfield, Mass.

Associated Press

intention of leaving, including eight led or controlled by Republicans. Four state offices did not respond: Alaska, Colorado, Delaware and Washington. Republican officials who said they had no intention to leave signaled strong support for the effort. Iowa's chief election official said the program, in less than a year, had helped the state identify more than 1,300 deceased voters not included in state data.

"ERIC is an effective tool for ensuring the integrity of Iowa's voter rolls," said Iowa Secretary of State Paul Pate, a Republican in his third term.

The program was started in 2012 by seven states and was bipartisan from the beginning, with four of the founding states led by Republicans. Today, 32 states and the District of Columbia are members.

In April, that will drop to 31 when Alabama officially

leaves the group. Allen made various claims during his 2022 campaign about the group that prompted a rebuke from then-Secretary of State John Merrill. Merrill, a Republican, noted that ERIC had identified more than 19,000 records of potentially deceased Alabama voters since 2016.

A chief complaint about the program is that it was funded by George Soros, the billionaire investor and philanthropist who has long been the subject of conspiracy theories. While ERIC received initial funding from the nonpartisan Pew Charitable Trusts, that money was separate from the money provided to Pew by a Soros-affiliated organization that went to an unrelated effort, said ERIC's executive director, Shane Hamlin.

The effort has since been funded through annual dues by member states. Hamlin said the current

discussions among member states have been "robust" and decisions are expected soon on potential changes.

"Is the mission of ERIC still relevant? Yes," Hamlin said. "But are the ways in which members use ERIC to achieve that mission still relevant? Still effective? That is what we are talking about internally."

Missouri Secretary of State Jay Ashcroft, a Republican, is among those pushing for changes. In an interview, Ashcroft said he wants the system to drop a requirement for member states to send mailings to eligible but unregistered voters.

"It needs to be focused on cleaning rolls," Ashcroft said. "It is not the job of the secretary of state to add voters to the rolls. It's our job to make sure there is a good, simple process for people who meet the requirements to be registered."

Ashcroft also is weighing the value that taxpayers receive from the program, arguing the state misses out on data for voters who leave Missouri because several surrounding states don't participate. Time is running out, he said, for changes to be made.

"I have raised them with ERIC, and so far I am not satisfied with their response," Ashcroft said. "The clock is ticking."

A fellow Republican, Ohio Secretary of State Frank LaRose, said he was aware of concerns about the program but remained confident in the effort.

"Like any human endeavor, there are imperfections to that organization and, you know, some of the people involved have caused concern for others," LaRose told reporters last month. "But I can tell you that it is one of the best fraud-fighting tools that we have -- when it comes to actually catching people who try to vote in multiple states, when it comes to maintaining the accuracy of our voter rolls by removing those that move out of state." Lawmakers in Texas have introduced legislation that, if passed and signed into law, would require the state to leave the system. In Oklahoma, proposed legislation would prohibit the state from joining.

In California, Kansas and New Hampshire, lawmakers have introduced bills that would enable their states to join it, according to the Voting Rights Lab, which tracks voting legislation in the states. New York is another high population state that is not currently a member.

Gabriel Sterling, a top official in the Georgia secretary of state's office, said he recently appealed to representatives from three other Republican-led states to join the system.

"A lot of this is politics and gets in the way of good election administration," Sterling said. "At the end of the day, we want more people to join than leave. A lot of this is a tempest in a teacup." □

# Latest Ohio derailment poses no public risk, officials say

**SPRINGFIELD, Ohio (AP) —**

Authorities in Ohio say there is no indication of any risk to public health from the derailment of a Norfolk Southern cargo train between Dayton and Columbus, the second derailment of a company train in the state in a month.

Norfolk Southern and Clark County officials say 28 of the southbound train's 212 cars, including four empty tankers, derailed at about 4:45 p.m. Saturday in Springfield Township near a business park and the county fairgrounds. Springfield is about 46 miles (74 km) west of the state capital of Columbus.

As a precaution, residents living within 1,000 feet were asked to shelter in place and responding firefighters deployed the county hazmat team as a precaution, but officials early Sunday said there was "no indication of any injuries or risk to public health at this time."

A crew from Norfolk Southern, the hazmat team and the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency "each independently examined the crash site and verified there was no evidence of



**Multiple cars of a Norfolk Southern train lie toppled after derailling at a train crossing with Ohio 41 in Clark County, Ohio, Saturday, March 4, 2023.**

**Associated Press**

spillage at the site," officials said.

Officials confirmed Sunday afternoon that no hazardous materials were involved in the derailment.

Norfolk Southern general manager Kraig Barner said, however, that a couple of other cars on the train heading from Bellevue, Ohio, to Birmingham, Ala-

bama, were carrying liquid propane, and a couple more were carrying ethanol. The rest of the train was made up of mixed freight, such as steel and finished automobiles, he said.

"A lot of the cars that were actually derailed were empty boxcars," Barner said. Officials said two of the four empty tanker cars

that derailed had previously carried diesel exhaust fluid and the other two had residual amounts of polyacrylamide water solution, which Barner said is an additive commonly used in wastewater treatment.

County officials say environmental officials have confirmed that the derailment is not near a protect-

ed water source, meaning there is no risk to public water systems or private wells. The shelter-in-place order affected only four or five homes, officials said.

No injuries to the public or to the train's two-person crew were reported, he said. The cause of the derailment is under investigation and the findings will be turned over to the Federal Railroad Administration, Barner said.

Ohio Governor Mike DeWine said late Saturday night that President Biden and Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg had called him "to offer help from the federal government."

On Feb. 3, 38 cars of a Norfolk Southern freight train in East Palestine, in northeast Ohio near Pennsylvania, derailed and several of the train's cars carrying hazardous materials burned.

Though no one was injured, nearby neighborhoods in both states were imperiled. The crash prompted an evacuation of about half the town's roughly 5,000 residents, an ongoing multi-governmental emergency response and lingering worries among villagers of long-term health impacts. □

# Texas congressman who broke with GOP is censured



**Rep. Tony Gonzales, R-Texas, center, accompanied by House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy of Calif., left, and House Republican Conference chair Rep. Elise Stefanik, R-N.Y., right, speaks at a news conference on the steps of the Capitol in Washington, July 29, 2021.**

**Associated Press**

**By PAUL J. WEBER and KEN MILLER**

**Associated Press**

**AUSTIN, Texas (AP) —** Re-

publican U.S. Rep. Tony Gonzales of Texas was censured Saturday in a rare move by his state party

over votes that included supporting new gun safety laws after the Uvalde school shooting in his district.

The Republican Party of Texas voted 57-5 with one abstention, underlining how the two-term congressman's willingness to break with conservatives on key issues during his short time in office has caused GOP activists and some colleagues to bristle.

That independent streak includes opposing a sweeping House GOP immigration proposal over the U.S.-Mexico border, which includes a large portion of his South Texas district. He has also voted to defend same-sex marriage and was an outright "no" against a House rules package after Repub-

lican leader Kevin McCarthy became speaker.

Gonzales was defiant before the vote and did not attend the meeting of Texas GOP leaders and activists in Austin.

"We'll see how that goes," he told reporters in San Antonio on Thursday.

Gonzales spent the day working, according to Sarah Young, his spokesperson.

"He talked to veterans, visited with Border Patrol agents, and met constituents," Young said in a statement. "The Republican Party of Texas would be wise to follow his lead and do some actual work."

The vote followed an hour-long, closed-door executive session in which party members were allowed to

debate the resolution.

There were no public comments by members before or after the executive session, and the vote was held about one minute after the meeting resumed, followed by applause and cheers from committee members. In practical terms, a censure allows the state party to come off the sidelines if Gonzales runs again in 2024 and to spend money to remind primary voters about the rebuke. Passage of a censure required a three-fifths majority, or 39 votes of the State Republican Executive Committee, according to committee Chair Matt Rinaldi.

More than a dozen county GOP clubs in Gonzales' district had already approved local censure resolutions. □

## Indonesia fuel depot fire kills 19; 3 still missing

By TATAN SYUFLANA and  
NINIEK KARMINI  
Associated Press

JAKARTA, Indonesia (AP)

— Indonesian rescuers and firefighters on Sunday searched for three people who were still missing after a large fire spread from a fuel storage depot in the capital and killed at least 19 people.

The Plumpang fuel storage station, operated by state-run oil and gas company Pertamina, is near a densely populated area in the Tanah Merah neighborhood in North Jakarta. It supplies 25% of Indonesia's fuel needs.

At least 260 firefighters and 52 fire engines extinguished the blaze just before midnight on Friday after it tore through the neighborhood for more than two hours, fire officials said.

Footage showed hundreds of people running in panic as thick plumes of black smoke and orange flames filled the sky.

Indonesian President Joko Widodo visited the fire-hit areas on Sunday morning to reassure people that the government would help those in need.

Widodo said he has ordered the minister of state-owned enterprises and the Jakarta governor to immediately find a way to relocate residents away from the fuel storage area or

to move the depot away from the neighborhood.

"Not only in here, but all state-owned vital objects must be audited and re-evaluated to determine a safe buffer zone for the community, because this involves human life," Widodo told reporters after visiting a temporary shelter for displaced people in North Jakarta's Koja neighborhood. National police chief Gen. Listyo Sigit Prabowo said a preliminary investigation showed the fire was caused by a technical problem involving excess pressure as the depot received fuel from Pertamina's Balongan Refinery in West Java province.

"It was found that a fire occurred during a filling of Pertamina fuel," Listyo told a news conference late Saturday, referring to a type of fuel oil produced by Pertamina.

He didn't elaborate as investigators from Pertamina and the police were still working to confirm the cause of the fire, including by questioning dozens of witnesses and examining video recordings from surveillance cameras.

Residents living near the depot said they smelled a strong odor of gasoline, causing some people to vomit, after which thunder rumbled twice, followed by a huge explosion.



A pet macaque stands on its owner's motorbike as people inspect the damage to a neighborhood affected by a fuel depot fire in Jakarta, Indonesia, Saturday, March 4, 2023.

Associated Press

Sri Haryati, a mother of three, said the fire began to spread about 20 minutes later, causing panic.

"I was crying and immediately grabbed our valuable documents and ran with my husband and children," Haryati said, adding that she heard smaller blasts that echoed across the neighborhood as orange flames jumped from the depot.

Rescuers were still searching for three people who were reported missing. About 35 people were receiving treatment in five hospitals, some of them in critical condition.

Listyo said more than 1,300 people were displaced and taking shelter in 10 government offices, a Red Cross command post and a sport stadium.

Pertamina's head Nicke

Widyawati apologized and said the company would provide help to the community and cooperate in the investigation.

"We will carry out a thorough evaluation and reflection internally to prevent similar incidents from happening again," Widyawati said in a statement, adding that the company ensured the safe supply of fuel oil.

On Saturday, grieving relatives gathered at a police hospital's morgue in eastern Jakarta to try to identify their loved ones. Officials said the victims were burned beyond recognition and could only be identified through DNA and dental records.

In 2014, a fire at the same fuel depot engulfed at least 40 houses, but no casualties were reported. □



From left, Sweden's Ministry of Justice Maria Malmer Stenergard, Spain's Interior Minister Fernando Grande-Marlaska, Minister for Home Affairs and Security of Malta Byron Camilleri, Italy's Interior Minister Matteo Piantedosi, Greece's Minister of Migration Notis Mitarachi, and Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Cyprus Costas Constantinou hold a press conference at the MED 5 conference held in Valletta, Malta, Saturday, March 4, 2023.

Associated Press

By K. SCHEMBRI ORLAND  
Associated Press  
VALLETTA, Malta (AP) — Less

than a week after a deadly migrant shipwreck off Italy, five European Union coun-

## Mediterranean countries push for EU solidarity on migration

tries on the Mediterranean Sea pushed back Saturday against their northern neighbors for not accepting asylum-seekers under a voluntary relocation initiative.

The ministers responsible for migration policy in Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Malta and Spain met in Malta's capital, Valletta, ahead of an EU ministerial meeting in Brussels next week on migration. The countries started working together as the MED 5 in 2021 to confront the challenges of illegal migration.

Greek Minister of Migration

and Asylum Notis Mitarachi told reporters that just 1% of the migrants who arrived in those front-line nations along the EU's southern border last year were taken in by other EU members under a voluntary relocation program. Spain's interior minister, Fernando Grande-Marlaska Gomez, said the current process is "too slow, too selective, with too few results and too little predictability." He pledged to come up with a more effective mechanism when Spain holds the EU's rotating presidency in the second half of 2023. □

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# U.N. report: Modern weapons being smuggled to Haiti from U.S.

By **EDITH M. LEDERER**

**Associated Press**

**UNITED NATIONS (AP)** — Increasingly sophisticated weapons are being trafficked into Haiti mainly from the United States and especially from Florida amid worsening lawlessness in the impoverished Caribbean nation, according to a U.N. report released Friday. The report by the Vienna-based Office on Drugs and Crime said a network of criminal actors including members of the Haitian diaspora “often source firearms from across the U.S.” and smuggle them into Haiti illegally by land from the neighboring Dominican Republic, by air including to clandestine airstrips, but most frequently by sea.

“Popular handguns selling for \$400-\$500 at federally licensed firearms outlets or private gun shows in the U.S. can be resold for as much as \$10,000 in Haiti,” the report said. “Higher-powered rifles such as AK47s, AR15s and Galils are typically in higher demand from gangs, commanding correspondingly higher prices.”

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security’s investigations unit reported “a surge in firearms trafficking from Florida to Haiti between 2021 and 2022” and a spokesman described the recovery of increasingly sophisticated weapons



**Firearms are displayed during a news conference at the Miami Field Office of the Homeland Security Investigations (HSI), that was working with other agencies to crack down on an increase of firearms and ammunition smuggling to Haiti and other Caribbean nations, on Aug. 17, 2022.**

**Associated Press**

destined for Haitian ports “including .50 caliber sniper rifles, .308 rifles, and even belt-fed machine guns,” according to the report.

“Weapons are frequently procured through straw man purchases in U.S. states with looser gun laws and fewer purchasing restrictions” and then transported to Florida where they are concealed inside consumer products, electronic equipment, garment linings, frozen food items and even the hull of freighters, it said.

“On arrival in Haiti, including major hubs such as Port-de-Paix and Port-au-Prince,

cargo is offloaded and passed on to end-users via a host of intermediaries.”

The 47-page report, entitled “Haiti’s Criminal Markets: Mapping Trends in Firearms and Drug Trafficking,” cites the challenges of patrolling 1,771 kilometers (1,100 miles) of Haiti’s coastline and a 392-kilometer (243-mile) border with the Dominican Republic with national police, border and coast guard operations that are severely understaffed, under-resourced and “increasingly targeted by gangs.”

The heavily-armed gangs are also targeting ports,

highways, critical infrastructure, customs offices, police stations, court houses, prisons, businesses and neighborhoods, the report said. And throughout 2022 and early 2023 they have expanded their control over key access points to cities including the capital Port-au-Prince.

“Many are also engaged in predatory behavior in communities under their control contributing to rising levels of extortion, sexual violence, kidnapping and fatal violence,” it said, citing an increase in homicides from 1,615 in 2021 to 2,183 in 2022, and a doubling of

kidnappings from 664 to 1,359 during the same period.

The U.N. report said private security companies in Haiti are permitted to buy and keep arms, and while independent verification isn’t possible “specialists speculate that there could be 75,000 to 90,000 individuals working with roughly 100 private security companies across the country, at least five times the number of registered police officers.” According to the U.N. Office on Drugs and Crime, Haiti has long been a transshipment hub to move cocaine, cannabis and to a lesser extent heroin and amphetamines to the United States and the Dominican Republic.

The drugs mostly enter the country via boat or plane, arriving through public, private and informal ports as well as clandestine runways.

During the 2000s, the report said, drug traffickers moved illegal airstrips from the outskirts of Port-au-Prince northward to more isolated areas including Savane Di-ane, roughly 50 miles north of the capital.

When then-President Jovenel Moïse ordered the destruction of suspected clandestine airstrips in June 2021, UNODC said “local authorities refused.” A week later, he was assassinated. □



**The Argentinian cruiser General Belgrano sinks amid orange life rafts holding survivors in the South Atlantic Ocean, May 1, 1982, after being torpedoed by the British Royal Navy.**

**Associated Press**

By **DANICA KIRKA**

**Associated Press**

**LONDON (AP)** — Britain has reasserted its sovereignty over the Falkland Islands

after Argentina pulled out of a cooperation agreement and demanded new talks over the South Atlantic territory that sparked a

## U.K. says Falklands are British as Argentina seeks new talks

1982 war between the two countries. The pronouncement came after Argentine Foreign Minister Santiago Cafiero said on Twitter that he informed British Foreign Secretary James Cleverly about his country’s decision when the pair met on the margins of the Group of 20 summit in India last week. “The Falkland Islands are British,” Cleverly tweeted late Friday. “Islanders have the right to decide their own future — they have chosen to remain a self-governing U.K. Overseas Territory.” Earlier, Cafiero

said he told Cleverly that Argentina had decided to pull out of a 2016 agreement in which the two countries pledged to work together on a variety of issues. While that agreement sought to improve cooperation in the South Atlantic, both sides continued to assert their claims to sovereignty over the Falkland Islands, known as Islas Malvinas in Argentina.

Cafiero also said he proposed new talks in line with a 1965 U.N. General Assembly resolution that encouraged Britain and Argentina

to find a peaceful solution to the dispute over the islands.

Argentina has long claimed sovereignty over the islands, which are about 300 miles (480 kilometers) from South America and home to some 3,500 people.

Argentina argues that the islands were illegally taken from it in 1833. Britain, which says its territorial claim dates to 1765, sent a warship to the islands in 1833 to expel Argentine forces who had sought to establish sovereignty over the territory. □



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## Prime Minister Evelyn Wever-Croes to present at the UN's Women's Day conference

**(Oranjestad)—The 67th Commission states of Women will be held at the United Nation's headquarters in New York, where the theme will be based around women. Every year, The UN unites all members and leaders of the world for a conference.**

During this conference, the position of women will be discussed, as well as the measures needed to end inequality between men and women. In the conference, there will be attention paid to what is needed to guaranty a future where

women can have the same opportunities to hold importance positions in society.

In a declaration by Prime Minister Wever-Croes, she expressed the importance of having female representation everywhere, especially in important positions where decisions are made for the country, because it is only then that the focus for women's rights will remain a priority.

This year, the prime minister of Aruba has been invited to attend the conference

and represent the Dutch Kingdom. During the conference, there will be a general debate and the Ministerial Roundtables as well, both which the prime minister will participate in.

The conference will highlight among other things the advancements in the women's rights movement on Aruba. Something very important that the prime minister will bring forth during the conference is Aruba's efforts in stimulating and promoting equal opportunities for young girls and women on the island.



It is no secret what has been accomplished in the prime minister's generation. This is thanks to the hard work from those that came before her who fought for equal opportunities for

women. This meeting will be an interesting one, and the topic of women's rights in Aruba will be discussed. There will also be discussions on the Dutch Kingdom's efforts in this issue. □

## DOW asks to not climb up the Hooiberg hill during construction

**(Oranjestad)—Back in October of 2022, the minister of Tourism and Public Health, Dangui Oduber, announced the start of the embellishment project for Hooiberg Hill as part of the different projects that focuses on the improvement and elevation of product Aruba.**

The embellishment projects for Hooiberg Hill has been ongoing for a while already, and during a press conference last October, Minister Oduber indicated that the project must be finished at the beginning of this year. However, that has still not happened. The DOW has published a public service announcement for the Aruban community on their Facebook page a few days ago:

"This is a request for everyone visiting the Hooiberg Hill that there is still ongoing construction at this site. We are experiencing tiny delays due to people still climbing the site. Construction is set to be finished next week if there are no



further delays. We ask that you please keep this in mind."

The first phase of the project, in which the stairs have been improved and the hut at the entrance has been renovated, was realized with funds from TPEF. In the next phase, ATA will be financing the remodel of the existing viewer.

Along with TPEF, the stairs of the hill will be fixed and painted with the help of local artists. The goal for the Hooiberg Hill is to make this a colorful attraction for locals and tourists.

Minister Dangui Oduber mentioned during the conference in October that Aruba is a destination of high quality and that visitors pay a lot of money to visit the island. That is why it is important to keep improving product Aruba so tourists could experience the value of their money. This goal is part of the initiative to further diversify Aruba as a tourist destination. □



## Aqua Grill restaurant: The taste of New England with Caribbean flair



**ORANJESTAD** — One thing is for certain: Chef Scott Scheuerman and his team are famous for getting people hooked, just like the fish on your plate. You will get the taste of home fused with Caribbean while dining in elegance. Scheuerman will tell how Aqua Grill established its name since opening in 2002, and why it reaped accolades from such prestigious travel publications as Fodor's, who says, "This hip restaurant is heaven on earth for seafood lovers, who will find fresh fish galore..." Now is your chance to taste Aqua Grill's NEW seasonal menu and create a lifetime culinary memory.

### 'A Scheuer thing'

Secretly, we all know that the success of a restaurant begins in the kitchen. That is where the chef creates his magic and for Aqua Grill the culinary team has won an assortment of awards for their continuous delivery of 'haute-cuisine del mar.' Classic seafood is mingled with contemporary ideas resulting in surprising dishes that soon made the restaurant a must-dine, confirmed by established travel media specialists like Fodor's and Frommer's.

American-born Scheuerman, executive chef of Aqua Grill, is thrilled about 'his restaurant'. "We started out as a New England style seafood restaurant, patterned after Boston style. But we quickly blended into some Caribbean, local flair... if you will. We do still offer the traditional New England dishes like whole Maine lobster, northern seafood plates like the salmon, tuna



and swordfish. We buy also from the local fisherman to offer Caribbean dishes like snapper and grouper which are number one sellers in our restaurant being the most prevalent local fishes. Catches like wahoo, mahi mahi and brasil are welcome too, anything that comes out of the water we embrace."

### Fresh import from Boston

Aqua Grill flies in their own shipments on a weekly basis mostly from Boston because the price quality balance is the best, says the chef. "We are unique in this. Number one priority is buying fresh, we mean not frozen. Our original concept is New England seafood and we stick to that concept. They have a wonderful assortment of oysters and lobsters as well." Aqua Grill also offers international fusion type of menu items; actually all you wish for is there. A very balanced menu awaits you. "And we have options for meat lovers and vegetarians/vegans too. We, however, do not mix it up too much because we believe we do not want to lose our identity as a seafood restaurant," Scheuerman adds.

### Sublime menu

Now is the time to indulge in Aqua Grill's dinner experience. The established restaurant offers a sensational menu. We present to you a Raw Bar with among others fresh Oysters on the half Shell, Littleneck Clams, Peruvian Ceviche and Lobster Salad. Steamed Dumplings and Prawns or Steamed Mussels seduce you from the open view kitchen.

After that continue your gastronomic trip to heaven with the house specialties like Main Lobster, steamed or broiled or maybe you crave for the best Alaska King Crab Legs you have ever tasted?

You haven't reached your destination yet because there are more main course options to blow you away: Seared Chilean Sea Bass, Cioppino or Blackened Tuba are just some to mention.

Take a pick out of Aqua Grill's delicious desserts to finally conclude yes, this beats it all. We will be back for more.

Aruba Today is delighted to share to its readers a new segment called "Beauty and the Beach", where we take a minute to honor our guests who have decided to spend their vacation on our beautiful and warm island.

In this edition, we'd like to give a shout out to **Yolanda and Michelle from Toronto, Canada**, who were seen enjoying the sandy beaches of Aruba. Aruba is always proud to host all families and guests. We at Aruba Today encourage any visitor of the island to send in their pictures and/or messages; who knows? You might get on the cover!

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## Eagle Beach ranked among the top beaches in the Caribbean and the world

**ORANJESTAD – For the first, TripAdvisor gave Eagle Beach Aruba the top prize for the best beach in the Caribbean. For many years the government's focus is on the recovery and attention to our natural and historical heritage.**

TripAdvisor awards the 2023 Travelers Choice Best of the Best Award based on the reviews of its website visitors. Eagle Beach ranked number 1 in the top 25 best beaches in the Caribbean and number 2 in the top 25 in the world. They also listed two of our beaches in the top 25 in the Caribbean. Baby Beach ranks number 19, and Arashi Beach at 23.

On January 2022, the government completed the 1st phase of the beaches upgrade in Aruba. They replenished the beaches with white to create a nice ambience.

Before that, it refurbished the Arashi, Boca Catalina, and the Fisherman's Hut (one part). They will also upgrade the beaches

in Ayo, Casibari, Seroe Colorado, and San Nicolas.

The committee "Aruba Amenities" has representatives of the Department of Public Works (DOW), the Department of Infrastructure and Planning (DIP), the Department of Nature and Environment (DNM), the Aruba Tourism Authority (ATA), the Ministry of Finance and Culture, Department of Economic Affairs (DEACI), National Archeological Museum and ECA.

The committee members dedicate attention to our national natural and historic patrimonies to create renovation programs, build facilities in these areas, and create new opportunities for our community.

Prime Minister Evelyn Wever-Croes urges the community to take care of our beaches which are part of our cultural heritage with great value for Aruba. If we continue to take care of them, our visitors and we, as locals, can continue to enjoy them. □

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# Today Is Going To Be A Good Day



Here's why: Aruba Today collected some things to do BEYOND the beach. Yes, we know. Aruba, located 15 miles north of Venezuela in the warm waters of the southern Caribbean, is home to beautiful white-sand beaches, 82-degree days, and thus ideal for the perfect beach day. But we are also blessed with some of the warmest people in the world and our island is 19.6 miles long and 6 miles across, with a total area of 70 square miles. Bit more to discover than the white stretch on the coastline we say. Let's mention some of these hidden gems.

## Nature Calls

The Arikok National park is worth the ride. We love the hikes that are guided by the park's rangers whose job is to maintain trails and protect natural resources. The flora and fauna are beautiful and the historical sites tell you about the island's indigenous roots. The guided tours are even free of charge. If you are not up to walking, you can drive through the park, one way or another this park is

a great place to spend an entire day. Cruising through the landscape you end up at some of the most stunning beaches like Dos Playa or Daimara Beach. In Total the park consists of 7907 acres protected nature with a richness of animals living in it. The Aruban whiptail lizard (cododo), Aruban cat eye snake (santanero) and endangered rattle snake (cascabel) are just some of them, you can also admire these close in the park's Visitors' Center. For more information, visit the website [www.arubanationalpark.org](http://www.arubanationalpark.org)

## The Lighthouse

No, you would not think of this as a hidden gem. The California Lighthouse is actually one of the most known highlights in Aruba and many repeated guests most probably took the ride uphill already. But, there is a significant change to this tower. Since September 2016 you can climb the top. In 2015 Stichting Monumentenfonds started the restoration of the California Lighthouse. The project finished in September 2016 and the Lighthouse is now open for visitors to enjoy the beautiful view from the top. The construction of the California Lighthouse started in 1915. The name 'California' came from a vessel of the West India Company and Pacific Steamship Co. called 'California' that shipwrecked in the area in

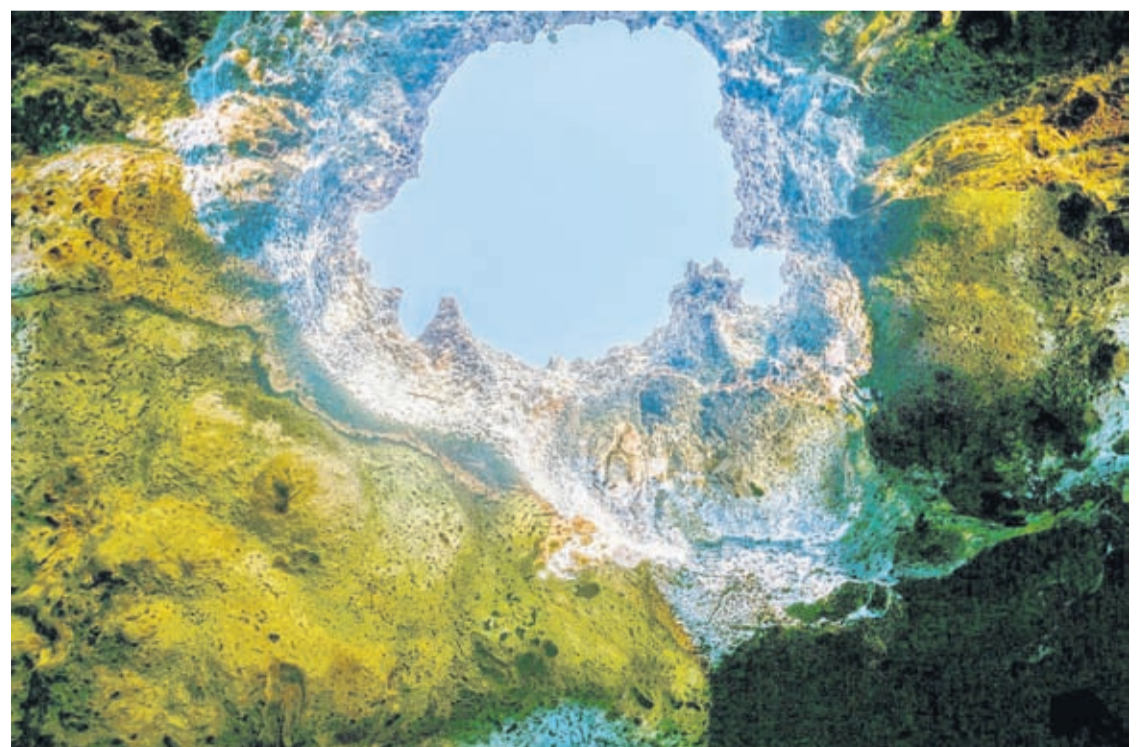


1891. Therefore they came up with the idea of building a lighthouse that could indicate the island's eastern tip to ships with its light. [www.arubalighthouse.com](http://www.arubalighthouse.com) will give you more information.

## Kayak in the Mangroves

Mangel Halto at Savaneta is definitely a place not to miss out on. The beautiful beach with the natural mangroves is simply a beauty, but if you are into a more active way to enjoy

the nature: take a kayak. While you are doing some workout -as it might get a little windy and rough-, you will see the island from a different perspective. You can even make a stop to do some snorkeling at the reef. Its fun, it's healthy and for sure something else. There are several companies that offer kayak tours, we had good experience with The Shack Kayak Tours Aruba, find them on Facebook.□





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[www.infiniaruba.com](http://www.infiniaruba.com)

# 13 youths receive their diploma in the second edition of Jump18

(Oranjestad)—On Friday night, the closing ceremony and graduation of the second edition of the Jump18 project took place. Jump18 is a project with the goal to help and guide children and youths between 4 and 18 years old and their parents to live a healthier life. Through this project, the Jump18 team contributed in reducing the risk of obesity and other diseases in children and youths.

Jump18 consists of a group of young Aruban professionals in the area of medicine, along with pediatrician Dr. Jamiu Busari, who developed this project to help kids and their parents improve their health. The philosophy behind Jump18 is to motivate and allow the children of Aruba and their parents to live a healthier and sustainable lifestyle that will prevent the harmful effects of obesity in children.

"We are very excited, because it went really well. There were of course a few challenges along the way, but it was extraordinary to see how motivated the children were," Dr. Busari expressed. He explained that the challenges they faced in getting parents to participate in the program varied, but they noticed that all parents had the same motivation to support their children and to motivate them into participating in the project's activities. "That was very inspiring for us to see," he stated.

Compared to the first edi-

tion of Jump18, this edition had 13 participants. This was less than the first edition, but the results were the same, as Dr. Busari indicated. This means that whatever the Jump18 team is doing to help the children is indeed working.

He further explained that they saw improvement in the participant's self-esteem. Not one child gained weight in the period of six weeks of the project. More than half lost weight and their physical abilities improved; they were more active.

Dr. Busari also added that they helped some of the parents to have access to a part of the community that would otherwise not be accessible had they not participated in the project.

"I can say that jump18 worked the first time. This time, we are seeing the same results, and we hope to see it work better next time," he remarked.

Damian Henriquez (11) was one of the participants who completed this edition of Jump18. He shared his experience in the project to our reporter. Damian found out about Jump18 when he got diagnosed as a pre-diabetic and was told to change his habits and lifestyle. "I learned a lot from this program and I believe that this program was a big help to all of us and our families," he stated.

During the program, the participants received les-



sons, workshops, guidance and help in different areas, including the topic of self-esteem, physical activity, cooking and more. Damian took his time to express his gratitude to everyone who helped him in the different areas of life during the project: "I wanted to say thank you to the case managers that helped and guided me with this big change, because it isn't easy to see people eat something I can't. Also a thank you for their guidance on the topic of bullying, self love and on team work. I feel much more secure with myself," he expressed. □



# CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

**ACROSS** 47 Held

1 Sprawling power

6 Site of a biblical tower

11 Italian seaport

12 Love to pieces

13 Political crime

14 Poison

15 Minnow or marlin

17 "Sure thing!"

18 Be heedful

22 Sea eagle

23 Made a quick thrust

27 Messy sorts

29 "Beauty and the Beast" heroine

30 Adds up

32 Trick

33 Slickers and umbrellas

35 Parrot or puppy

38 Hunted animal

39 Require defrosting

41 Dwelling

45 Make blank

46 Shire of "Rocky"

48 Choose from the menu

## DOWN

1 Nest sight

2 For each

3 One —

4 Java joint

5 Glossy fabric

6 Soaking spot

7 Brouhaha

8 Like some cars

9 Buffalo's lake

10 Eye part

16 Costa del —

FINED	IRISH
AGAVE	RUNTO
CUBIT	AESOP
TABLET	UKE
ONE	CODDLED
RAD	TREATS
PIETY	
ASHORE	SKA
SITINON	TED
ERA	STARRED
COPE	INANE
TULSA	OTTER
STEEP	NEARS

## Saturday's answer

18 Final, for one

19 Singer Guthrie

20 Shoelace problem

21 Snack in a gym bag

24 Sticky stuff

25 "Frozen" queen

26 Doe or buck

28 Hit, in a way

31 Knight's title

34 "Keen!"

35 Harbor structure

36 Beige hue

40 Try out

42 Ancient

43 Backgammon cube

44 Lobed organ

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11					12				
13					14				
			15		16		17		
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39			40		41	42	43	44	
45					46				
47					48				

3-6

AXYDLBAAXR  
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

3-6

## CRYPTOQUOTE

ZPJ AP ZFLP, ZBLP, YDII

NYQ FJ TPZZ FD IBBH

NPDIJDRPN. — NQZLFY VZYJC  
Saturday's Cryptoquote: ALL JOURNEYS  
HAVE SECRET DESTINATIONS OF WHICH THE  
TRAVELER IS UNAWARE. — MARTIN BUBER

# Betting on social media as a news destination for the young

By DAVID BAUDER

AP Media Writer

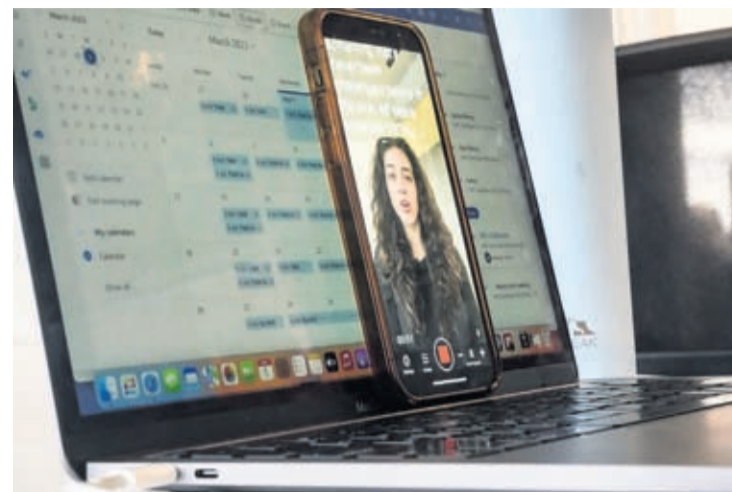
**NEW YORK (AP)** — If young people are spending so much time on social media, it stands to reason that's a good place to reach them with news.

Operators of the News Movement are betting their business on that hunch. The company, which has been operating for more than a year, hopes to succeed despite journalism being littered with years of unsuccessful attempts to entice people in their 20s to become news consumers.

The brainchild of former Dow Jones executives, the News Movement is using a staff of reporters with an average age of 25 to make tailored news content for sites like TikTok, Instagram, YouTube and Twitter.

"You really have to stay humble and stay open to different trends and ideas," said Ramin Beheshti, president and a founder of the organization with former Dow Jones CEO Will Lewis. "We've built a newsroom that reflects the audience that we're trying to go after." Among the newsrooms the company is producing TikTok videos for is The Associated Press. The AP has provided office space for the company and Lewis is vice chairman of its board of directors.

Some of the content would startle a news traditionalist. Recognizing his friends appreciated calming videos, one staff member created an "explainer" on the mid-term elections for Snapchat that used video of a horse being groomed, pizza being made and flowers growing while an offscreen voice discusses politics.



Kiki Sideris, a reporter for The News Movement (TNM), a social media news operation re-imagined for Gen-Z consumers, use her phone to produce a TikTok video on Wednesday, March 1, 2023, in New York.

Associated Press

In "Get Ready with Me," two women prepare for work while talking about some things in the news.

There are more typical offerings: video of the earthquake in Turkey, for example, and reports on President Biden's proposals on abortion and social media. Explainer stories take a step back to tell people why something is news.

Some stories aren't really news at all, but stem from personal experience. One New York-based journalist who wondered why police didn't immediately jump onto subway tracks to save someone who fell looked into it to find they were working to stop trains.

Curious about why stories about odd things done by Florida residents are a staple of news coverage, a staff member made a TikTok video showing that it's partly because police there often release photos and details about incidents faster than other states. There's also relatable content that provides a service, of a sort: asking young people on the street some

of the excuses they've used to break a date.

"News isn't always what you think it is," said Jessica Coen, U.S. executive editor, who's had leadership roles at Mashable, Morning Brew and The Cut.

Story formats differ to reflect where they are placed. Most TikTok videos are about a minute, while a meaty YouTube piece about women's safety and how London police react to assault cases ran for nearly 14 minutes.

Some 60% of people in Gen Z, or young adults up to their mid-20s, say they get news through social media, according to a study by Oliver Wyman and the News Movement. Other studies show people in Gen Z have a lower opinion of traditional news outlets than their elders.

Given this, the News Movement believes that efforts by news organizations to entice young people to their own sites or apps are tough sells.

"News shouldn't feel like work," Beheshti said. "It should be part of your daily consumption."

One person who sampled some of the News Movement's TikTok stories offered a mixed review, saying they often seemed to emphasize flash over substance. They need to "read the room" better, said Gabriel Glynn-Habron, a 21-year-old college student from Asheville, N.C. who is studying journalism. □

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24/7

## Nations reach accord to protect marine life on high seas



Sandbar sharks swim next to a person snorkeling in the Mediterranean Sea off the coast of Hadera, Israel, Monday, Nov. 21, 2022.

Associated Press

By **CHRISTINA LARSON** and **PATRICK WHITTLE**  
Associated Press

**WASHINGTON (AP)** — For the first time, United Nations members have agreed on a unified treaty to protect biodiversity in the high seas — representing a turning point for vast stretches of the planet where conservation has previously been hampered by a confusing patchwork of laws.

The U.N. Convention on the Law of the Sea came into force in 1994, before marine biodiversity was a well-established concept. The treaty agreement concluded two weeks of talks in New York.

An updated framework to protect marine life in the regions outside national boundary waters, known as the high seas, had been in discussions for more than 20 years, but previous ef-

orts to reach an agreement had repeatedly stalled. The unified agreement treaty, which applies to nearly half the planet's surface, was reached late Saturday. "We only really have two major global commons — the atmosphere and the oceans," said Georgetown marine biologist Rebecca Helm. While the oceans may draw less attention, "protecting this half of earth's surface is absolutely critical to the health of our planet." Nichola Clark, an oceans expert at the Pew Charitable Trusts who observed the talks in New York, called the long-awaited treaty text "a once-in-a-generation opportunity to protect the oceans — a major win for biodiversity."

The treaty will create a new body to manage conservation of ocean life and

establish marine protected areas in the high seas. And Clark said that's critical to achieve the U.N. Biodiversity Conference's recent pledge to protect 30% of the planet's waters, as well as its land, for conservation. Treaty negotiations initially were anticipated to conclude Friday, but stretched through the night and deep into Saturday. The crafting of the treaty, which at times looked in jeopardy, represents "a historic and

overwhelming success for international marine protection," said Steffi Lemke, Germany's environment minister.

"For the first time, we are getting a binding agreement for the high seas, which until now have hardly been protected," Lemke said. "Comprehensive protection of endangered species and habitats is now finally possible on more than 40% of the Earth's surface." □

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# HBCU players seeking ways to increase numbers at NFL combine

By **MICHAEL MAROT**

**AP Sports Writer**

**INDIANAPOLIS (AP)** — Mark Evans II feels honored to be at this week's NFL's annual scouting combine.

The former Arkansas-Pine Bluff offensive lineman just believes more players from historically Black colleges and universities deserve to be in Indianapolis.

Nearly three years after the NFL announced its support for enhanced diversity policies and just weeks after the second Legacy Bowl and HBCU combine wrapped up, Evans and Isaiah Land are the only HBCU participants among the 319 invitees. That's half of last year's total of four.

"I feel like they're making progress, but I feel like it most definitely should be more than two," he said Saturday. "I feel like there are a lot of good players out there and I feel like we should be represented more."

Should combine officials ask, Evans has some suggestions: linebacker Jordan Lewis of Southern, Lewis' college teammate and 2023 Legacy Bowl defensive MVP Jason Dumas and North Carolina Central offensive lineman Robert Mitchell.

It's just a start — and he has more suggestions for next year's combine, too.

For now, though, Evans must acknowledge one



Washington Commanders general manager Martin Mayhew speaks during a press conference at the NFL football scouting combine in Indianapolis, Wednesday, March 1, 2023.

Associated Press

undeniable fact; two years after no HBCU players were drafted, he and Land look like the best hope of avoiding a repeat.

The 6-foot-2 1/2, 303-pound Texan is scheduled to work out Sunday with the offensive linemen before closing down the combine with Monday's bench press.

But the edge rusher from Florida A&M certainly did his part this weekend. Land measured in at 6-foot-3 1/2, 236 pounds, was clocked in the 40-yard dash at 4.62 seconds, 13th in his position group and just .02 seconds behind former Alabama star Will Anderson Jr., one of

the front-runners to be this year's No. 1 overall pick.

"I try to put my best foot forward every time because I just want to give hope to those guys at the HBCU level, like you know you could make it to this point," he said before Thursday's workout. "You've just got to stay consistent, and you've got to have that underdog mentality."

It's a lesson Land, who is from Buffalo, New York, seems to have taken from one of today's top HBCU ambassadors, Indianapolis Colts linebacker Shaquille Leonard. The three-time All-Pro beat the odds by

becoming a second-round pick, the 2018 AP Defensive Rookie of the Year and despite an injury-filled 2022 season is still regarded as one of the league's top playmakers. He's not alone. Washington Commanders general manager Martin Mayhew grew up in Tallahassee, Florida, and followed Land's Rattlers, partially because they were local but primarily because Florida A&M was his mother's alma mater. He's been a fan ever since.

"I want to give some shoutout to my old (college) teammate Deion Sanders for shining a light on black

colleges and HBCUs," Mayhew said earlier this week. "Florida A&M was a school that I was very familiar with, I watched all their games when I was in high school. They (HBCUs) are getting more views on television. They're much more visible than they were four or five years ago."

So far, the numbers haven't moved much.

Even with help from Sanders, the former Jackson State coach, and Leonard coupled with the NFL's efforts, only four HBCU players were taken last year — the most in a single draft since 2019.

Fayetteville State cornerback Joshua Williams, the top HBCU selection last season at No. 135 overall (fourth round), made it pay off. He played in all 17 games, made 40 tackles, picked off one pass and earned a Super Bowl ring in his rookie season with the Kansas City Chiefs.

What else would help?

HBCUs have traditionally faced financial challenges with everything from athletic department budgets to educational support, and now face additional concerns in a college world with NIL deals and a transfer portal that makes it easier for Power Five schools to mine talent from smaller schools and conferences across the college landscape. □

## 33 Iditarod sled dog race mushers to trek across Alaska



The lead dogs for musher Bailey Vitello of Milan, New Hampshire, run down Fourth Avenue during the Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race's ceremonial start in downtown Anchorage, Alaska, on Saturday, March 4, 2023.

Associated Press

**WILLOW, Alaska (AP)** —

The race to Nome starts Sunday for 33 mushers in this year's Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race in Alaska. The mushers are to take off every two minutes in a staggered start across a frozen lake about 70 miles (112 kilometers) north of Anchorage. The race starts Sunday afternoon at 2 p.m. local time.

They will travel nearly a thousand miles (1,609 kilometers) over the unforgiving Alaska winterscape, climbing over two mountain ranges, mushing on

frozen rivers and streams and across the treacherous Bering Sea ice. The winner is expected to drive their sled dog team down Nome's Front Street to the iconic burlwood arch finish line in about 10 days. Leading the charge will be defending champion Brent Sass, a kennel owner and wilderness guide who lives on a homestead about a four-hour drive northwest of Fairbanks.

Also competing is Pete Kaiser, the 2019 champion. The 33 mushers in the race is the smallest field ever.

The very first race, held in 1973, had 34 mushers, but the average number of starters in the first 50 races was 63.

Only having two former champions in the race this year is a rarity.

Several veteran mushers have decided to retire or take a break from the Iditarod, including five-time champion Dallas Seavey, four-time winners Martin Buser and Jeff King and three-time champ Mitch Seavey. □

## Durant tiebreaker lifts Suns over Mavs in showcase of stars

By SCHUYLER DIXON

AP Sports Writer

**DALLAS (AP)** — Kevin Durant's tiebreaker jumper was like so many before — right on target in the closing seconds.

Luka Doncic's potential tying floater moments later in front of the rim was unlike most of his — spinning around and out.

What happened next was familiar — a little bad blood from last season's playoff series spilling, with Doncic and Devin Booker nose-to-nose before getting double technicals.

Durant scored 37 points, including the go-ahead shot, to lift the Phoenix Suns to a 130-126 victory over the Dallas Mavericks on Sunday in a thrilling showcase of stars for both teams.

The first meeting between Durant and Dallas' Kyrie Irving since they were traded by Brooklyn before the deadline last month was even at 126-all when Durant pulled up over Tim Hardaway Jr. and Irving, who scrambled over for the double team when Durant went to his left.

Too late.

"Nobody's ever going to retreat when they guard me," Durant said. "So sometimes I've got to veer off instead of straight-line driving it. I felt like I had a good handle on the ball. Once I had it on my hip I felt like I was in good position to stop on a dime."

Irving scored 30 points exactly four years to the day since the last time he faced Durant, when his Boston Celtics blew out Durant and his Golden State Warriors 128-95.

Doncic had 34 points and nine rebounds before the point-blank shot that could have tied it. He grabbed Durant for a foul after the rebound with 3.5 seconds remaining.

After the foul, Doncic and Booker, who scored 36 points, pushed and jawed at each other as officials and team personnel separated them before Durant's two clinching free throws. It was the 14th technical of the season for Doncic, two away from a one-game



Dallas Mavericks guard Kyrie Irving (2) and Phoenix Suns forward Kevin Durant (35) walk down the court during the second half of an NBA basketball game, Sunday, March 5, 2023, in Dallas.

Associated Press

suspension.

The teams finished tied 2-2 in the season series, with playoff seedings in the Western Conference wide

open below top-seeded Denver.

The bunched-up standings could mean an early rematch from last season's

West semifinals, when Doncic and the Mavs blew out Booker, Chris Paul and the Suns in Game 7 in Phoenix. A photo of a goofy-grinning Doncic looking at Booker went viral after that series. The last regular-season meeting of 2022-23 brought more tension.

"I loved it," said Hardaway, who scored 18 of his 21 points in the first half and was 6 of 8 on 3-pointers. "I know 77 isn't going to back down from anybody. It was bound to happen at some point, them coming face to face. Just happy it happened here at home."

Booker said he was talking to the official, but Doncic was skeptical.

"Based on the words, I don't think so," Doncic said.

Because Booker said he

was talking to an official, the Phoenix star believed Doncic said something first with his expletive-laced message.

"You guys say you don't want everybody to be friendly-friendly, there you go," Booker said. "We got some smoke."

Paul scored eight of his 11 points in the fourth quarter for one of several tiebreaking or go-ahead buckets for both teams.

Phoenix two-way player Ish Wainwright, who was a role player 100 miles (160 km) down the road from Dallas at Baylor before a brief stint as a tight end for the Bears, went 4 for 5 from 3-point range in the second half for 12 points. The last of those 3s put the Suns up two with 2:07 remaining. □

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You can also opt for a classic French Onion Soup, a Lobster Bisque or the famously Water's Edge House Wedge, a crisp wedge of fresh romaine lettuce topped with homemade blue cheese dressing, diced tomatoes, chopped bacon, caramelized pecans and blue cheese crumbles, drizzled with balsamic reduction. This followed by the Chef's special of seafood such as Fresh salmon filet seasoned and grilled, topped with lemon cilantro butter and served with homemade mashed potatoes and fresh asparagus, a nice plate of Ahi Tuna or a succulent pasta dish like the Florentina Fettuccine Alfredo. Meat Lovers will have their fix with choices of a devourable 22oz. Bone-In "Tomahawk" Rib-Eye, pan seared in garlic infused oil and finished in the oven or our juicy N.Y Strip Loin, seasoned & grilled. All our steaks options are seasoned with a blend of kosher salt and freshly cracked black pepper. Served with homemade mashed potatoes, seasoned vegetables and a choice of red wine reduction, green peppercorn demi glace, mushroom sauce, or bacon blue cheese butter. For extra sides the options are delectable. Fresh asparagus, seasonal vegetables, mashed or baked potatoes, fries or rice and beans. Combine your personal choice with one of the most exclusive wine from the

great selection of international wines to compliment your dish. Kids will enjoy every item of the specially compiled kids menu and there are also optional dishes for all vegans, vegetarians and gluten-free guests. To end the culinary voyage with some luscious sweetness, the desserts are wild. From a piece of coconut flan, NY cheese cake, carrot cake, chocolate brownie or our classic Tiramisu with kahlua and amaretto served with chocolate sauce and coffee jelly. Not to mention the fresh and light piece of key lime pie.

### Creating memories

If you are planning a birthday dinner, here you will receive a nice bottle of champagne to take home with you to extend your experience even further whether on the beach or your own private balcony.

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Just about every day of the week, there is a different live entertainment by the best local artists for you to enjoy. Whether you're in a romantic mood, or more in a swinging mood, there is absolutely a night especially for you where you can combine great music with delicious cocktails mixed with concoctions. In addition, Water's Edge offers three daily Happy Hours from 12pm-1pm, 4pm-6pm and again from 9pm-10pm with all premium brands specially priced.

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Whether you join us for breakfast, lunch or dinner, Water's Edge Restaurant & Bar offers a relaxed and inspirational dining experience overlooking the beautiful Eagle Beach with spectacular ocean views. Gather with friends and family for drinks and appetizers or a night of pampering and relaxation.



### Thank you to all our guests

From the bottom of our hearts, we would like to Thank all of our guests who showed us so much love and support all throughout the year, and hopefully will continue to do so in the years to come. What we are most grateful for is that we could get back to doing what we love, which is looking after our guests. So, thank you for every dinner, lunch, breakfast, every to-go order, every glass of wine, every birthday, anniversary and date-night that you spent with us this last year. To our new guests, Welcome! We hope you to see you back soon! ☐



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